

Caged Fury

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Summary: Darcy Lewis is an adult and as she always suspected; adults are boring. Apparently they don't have to be though, she's not quite sure. She's a little iffy on the details and her source isn't quite so reliable as she thought.

1. Chapter 1

Caged Fury

Chapter 1: The Cop Meets The Politician

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"Come on Darce, we're gonna be late." Jane called out as she ran from the car toward the open warehouse doors.

All was quiet in the dark of night as Darcy climbed out of the car and made the trek much slower after her friend. "Hurry up. I don't want to miss Thor's fight."

Darcy rolled her eyes but continued on her way, entering the warehouse moments later and locating Jane across the expansive floor.

"You know," she called out to the older woman. "When you said you wanted me to meet your boyfriend I pictured something more along the lines of a coffee shop or a cafe, not an abandoned warehouse in the middle of the shipping district."

"I told you," Jane replied turning from where she had been facing the far wall. "Between my school, Thor's work and your job this was the only time you could meet him."

When Darcy had finally caught up, Jane turned back to the wall and began typing into an electronic key pad Darcy hadn't realized was there.

"Lot'a security." She commented.

Jane shrugged. "Yeah, well, everyone knows this is going on but it doesn't change the fact that it's still unsanctioned fighting."

"Uh huh, and why exactly is the heir to a multinational Fortune 500 company taking part in an illegal fighting ring?"

Again Jane shrugged. "He says it's a good way to blow off steam."

"I guess that makes sense."

Jane punched in three series of numbers before the door unlocked with a heavy thunk. She then opened the door revealing a long industrial stairwell leading deep beneath the warehouse. With the door open a deep thrumming beat was audible, like the bass at a nightclub. The sounds of cheering people could be heard mixed in.

Darcy followed Jane down the stairwell until it bottomed out on another door. The thrumming was stronger now as were the sounds of people. Jane opened the door and the sounds spilled out at a deafening decibel. Darcy cringed as it assaulted her ears just barely noticing Jane head through the doorway and into the mass of milling bodies. She was just barely able to keep up as Jane pressed through the crowd and she was extremely relieved when they made it out beside a set of bleachers.

They climbed up, taking seats a few rows down from the top. Darcy took the opportunity to look around. Rows of bleachers were encircled around a steel cage like the ones she'd seen on tv. Within the cage was the fighting arena where several people were inspecting the area. On the other side of the cage she could see a booth built up on the cage wall, a glass window separating the announcer from the rest of the room.

"Come on," Jane began pulling Darcy out of her thoughts with an elbow to the side. "Stop pouting and enjoy yourself."

"I'm not pouting." She defended.

"Yes, you are. Look," Jane sighed. "I know you're still mourning your failed relationship, but you can't let that bastard control you anymore. You need to get out of the house, live a little."

Darcy sighed. "That's notâ€¦"

She trailed off as the announcer spoke up over the loudspeaker. The crowd got even louder as the first fight was announced. A man by the name of Blonsky, and another whose name she couldn't remember. Truth be told the only reason she remembered Blonsky's name was because of how brutal he was in the ring. She had to fight the urge to cringe every time he landed a punch. It was obvious this wasn't about the sport for him and more about beating his opponent into a bloody pulp.

Blonsky won and his opponent had to be taken away on a stretcher. The announcer spoke up again, calling out the next fight. Sif and Natasha "the Black Widow" Romanova.

Now this was a fight she could get into. Both women were highly skilled; even her novice eye could tell. They were also evenly matched taking hits, dodging and striking out. They'd been fighting for quite a bit of time before Sif suddenly got the upper hand, tossing Natasha to the mats and pinning her.

After that three more fights are announced before Thor was called up. Jane was practically vibrating beside her at the sound of his name.

Thor strode out into the ring moments after the announcement all broad shouldered and beautifully buff. She could definitely see the appeal for Jane. Thor's opponent was not much smaller than him and just as gorgeous. Short blonde hair and a shoulder to waist ratio similar to a certain snack chip.

Both men were easily matched but in the end Thor won. As he exited the arena with his opponent, both clearly friends, Jane jumped up from her seat and bolted out of the bleachers. Darcy barely had time to react before she was on the ground. Lucky for Darcy she was able to catch up before she lost her in the crowd.

Jane led her into a back area of the sub warehouse; an area that was obviously for the fighters to prep in. Thor was talking to his opponent when Jane called out to him excitedly. He turned at the sound of her voice a bright grin on his face as he approached and scooped her up into his arms. After a few minutes it became obvious that Darcy had been forgotten and rather than be scarred for life by what was obvious heading toward public indecency, she backed away slowly and disappeared further into the private areas.

Darcy sighed as she found herself alone. She was happy for Jane, don't get her wrong but at the end of the day it was hard to be happy for anyone who was enjoying the kind of relationship Darcy had only dreamed about. They shared a passion that she knew, all too well in fact, had been missing from her most recent failed attempt at companionship. Her desperation in finding that special someone had led her down the wrong path and right into the arms of the kind of man she'd always been cautious of. In fact she's fallen for the type of guy she'd saved her friends from numerous times.

Darcy supposed she should find some comfort in the way he chose to manipulate her. She was too strong willed to control physically so he had to find more creative ways to abuse her. And that's exactly what it was. He may never have lifted a finger against her but make no mistake it was abuse.

Darcy had just rounded a corner when she ran head first into a much larger body. She gasped in surprise and quickly backed up sputtering apologies for not paying attention.

The man in question was wickedly tall and handsome in a beat up sort of way. His hair is dark and slicked back and his piercing brown eyes stared back her with the kind of intensity that made her feel like she was the only girl in the world.

His expression was serious and he said nothing in reply to her apologies. He simply stared down at her so she did the only thing she'd ever really been good at; she talked.

"I'm so sorry, I'm such a klutz sometimes. I really wasn't paying attention and I should have been...um... I'm Darcy by the way." She sputtered out.

"Jack." Was his only reply, voice deep and rough. She wasn't proud to say she squirmed a bit when he said nothing else his intense gaze still going strong.

"So... Um..."

"Jack, what the hell did I say about scaring the spectators?" Another man, shorter with similar dark hair styled up and an Italian complexion. Darcy looked from the new man back to Jack who suddenly quirked a little smirk in her direction making it painfully obvious that any discomfort he may have caused her was completely intentional. That kind of behavior should have set off warning bells immediately but there was just something about Jack that drew her in.

"Brock." The smaller man introduced.

"Darcy." She replied.

"Well Darcy, I'm sorry about this big lug, he's a bit of a shit. And we hate to leave so abruptly but my boy here's up next in the ring.

It was then that Darcy finally noticed Jack's wrapped hands and the scarcity of his clothing. "Oh, of course." She finally answered. "It was nice meeting you." She continued as they walked passed. "Good luck." She called after them as they disappeared around the corner.

Darcy waited a moment before heading back the way she came, using the time to berate herself for being so lame. She came out of the back in time to hear Jack's name called and moved to get a better view of the fight. She found a little nook inside the fighter's area where she could clearly see the ring.

Jack fought with a passion she wasn't aware you could have while beating on someone. His strikes were quick for his size and coupled with the brute strength afforded to him by that size he easily kept the upper hand throughout the fight. The fact that his opponent lasted so long in the face of Jack's onslaught is amazing in and of itself.

She kept tabs on Jack as he exited the ring and for a brief moment their eyes lock. The confidence she'd built up her whole life failed her two years before and she looked away unable to reignite that confidence now.

As she turned away she searched around determined to find Jane and get home. She'd had enough time out in public and she was ready to go home and curl up into a ball in her all too bland "adult" apartment. The problem was Jane was nowhere in sight and neither was Thor for that matter and the guy was big enough not to miss. After a few more minutes of searching she finally turned to one of the other fighters, Thor's opponent, and asked if he'd seen either of them.

"Sorry ma'am. They took off for some privacy about thirty minutes

ago, give or take, I'm not entirely sure where they went."

Darcy sighed. "Thank you." She told him and he smiled at her sweetly and tells her it's not a problem. He looked like he was about to say something else when Blonsky, the first fighter, approached and shouldered him out of the way.

"You know I'm pretty sure I saw Thor leave. I assume you came in with his girl?" She nodded hesitantly suddenly uneasy about him. "Well that's just rude isn't, leaving you all by yourself. I'll tell you what; if you need a ride I'll be happy to see you home." He offered and news articles started flashing through her mind. Women murdered because they had the audacity to say no.

She was spared from having to answer though. "If she needs a ride Blonsky, you'll be the last person she calls." Jack informed him as he a Brock approached. Blonsky glanced back at Jack and looked about ready to argue, maybe even throw a punch when he seemed to think better of it and walked away.

Darcy let out a breath she wasn't even aware she was holding as Steve starts apologizing for letting Blonsky sneak up on him and get close to her.

"It's okay, really." She tells him sincerely and she offers him a smile that seems to soothe his concern.

"Seriously though, are you alright?" Jack cut in. She nodded a little thrown off by everything.

"Yes, thanks."

He nodded in reply. "If you need a ride home there's a bouncer over near concession who will call you a cab and make sure you get in okay."

"His name is Bucky." Steve speaks up pointing out a dark haired man across the warehouse. "He'll take good care of you."

"Thank you." She thanked them again and headed off with one last glance at Jack and a small smile.

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Darcy made it back to her apartment nearly an hour later. She boarded the elevator and took it to her floor, then made the trek once there to her front door. She paused with the key in the lock as she took a deep breath, mentally preparing herself to enter her dull, empty apartment. when she was sure she wouldn't completely lose it, she turned the key and stepped in, throwing her keys up on the hook by the door and walking the bland white hallway down into the equally bland white main apartment.

Plain white walls with equally boring pictures in gold frames. white leather sofa that her boss would just love for her office, but wasn't really all that comfortable for a living room. the only thing that offset the white were little pieces of gold and slate grey hard edged furniture. She hated it, but she was an adult and that's what adults did. they lived in apartments with no personality and spent way too much on ugly little faux gold statues that stare at you

disappointedly when you walk by. The only thing she really loved about this apartment was the fuzzy white carpet in the bedroom and the opulently plush bed.

Darcy stripped from her clothes and ran through her nightly routine, washing her face and putting on her pjs. She then made her way back into the bedroom where she face planted into cushiony mattress and wiggled her way under the covers.

She was asleep almost instantly.

2. Chapter 2

Caged Fury

Chapter 2: A Second Encounter

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Darcy woke the next morning to the blaring of her cell phone. She groaned as she rolled over and snatched it up off the nightstand.

"H'mlow?"

"Darcy! What the hell? Where were you last night? You know I know things haven't been so great for you lately but it's super rude to-"

Darcy hung up tossing the phone onto the other pillow and forcing herself out of bed. By the time she finished in the bathroom and walked back into the bedroom to get dress for work there was a text from Jane and three missed phone calls.

_"I'm sorry, please call me." _

Darcy called Jane back putting the phone on speaker and setting it on the table as she moved around the room.

"I'm sorry I yelled." Jane answered as soon as the lines connected.

"It's fine." Darcy replies tiredly.

"No it's not. I should know better by now." Jane sighs. "So, where did you run off too last night."

Darcy snorts. "I wanted to give you two a little space so you could grope each other in private." She could practically hear the blood rushing to Jane's face.

"Oh god, I'm so sorry Darce. I guess we do get a little carried away."

"Don't be sorry Jane. I'm glad you've found someone who's that special to you."

"Thanks. So, where did you end up?"

"I wandered around the back for little bit. Met some of the other fighters before catching a cab home."

"I'm so sorry Darcy. Really I am. I feel awful about ditching you like that. Will you let me make it up to you?"

"Yeah, I suppose if you want too."

Jane chuckles. "Great. How about lunch today. We can talk and maybe figure out when you can finally actually meet Thor."

"Sounds good to me."

"Great. I'll see you around noon? Our usual spot?"

"I'll see you then."

They hung up after short goodbyes and Darcy finished getting ready. She grabbed a bagel on the way out and picked up a coffee at her favorite cafe before finally making it to Stark Tower.

Darcy loved her job. As a lobbyist for Stark Industries she was constantly in the thick of it; rubbing elbows with the political elite and learning from the best there was in the business. She had earned her place at SI, there was no doubt about that, but she could admit she had a bit of a leg up. In High School, Darcy had contacted Pepper Potts for a job shadowing project. She hadn't really expected anything to come of it, but lo and behold a days later she got a call from the woman herself. she spent a week of the next month following the CEO around Stark Industries learning any and everything she could. she got to meet Tony Stark who took an instant liking to her snarky self and by the end was offered a summer job working as Pepper's junior assistant.

She stayed in touch with Pepper and Tony and after college Pepper offered her a job at SI. a dream job if ever there was one.

Up on the executive floors she greeted her assistant with a good morning and a smile and settled into her office to get some work done.

Three hours into her morning Tony Stark came barging into her office and took a seat opposite her. She was used to his behavior and so she ignored him until she'd finished with the paperwork she'd been chipping away at all morning.

She could see him fidgeting in his seat, and she held back the smirk of satisfaction at his discomfort.

"You can't ignore me forever Lewis." He finally broke the silence.

"I can try." She replied never looking up at him. He blew out an exasperated breath but said nothing else until she put down her pen nearly ten minutes later.

"Are you finished now? Finally have time for your dear ol' boss?"

"I always have time for Pepper." She told him. "So what do you want?"

"Want? I'm hurt Lewis. As if the only reason I would come down here and visit my favorite former intern is because I want something."

Darcy rolled her eyes and fixed him with an unimpressed stare. "I repeat, what do you want?"

Tony sighed. "You're douche bag ex applied for a job. Jarvis just picked his resume out of the fold."

"Okay, and this concerns me how?"

"The board of directors expects the company to give every applicant whose qualified an interview. Whether or not he or she gets the job is up to Pepper but I just thought I should warn you he might be around in the next couple of weeks."

Darcy shrugged. "Alright, thanks for the heads up."

"Seriously, that's it? No rage, no "are you kidding me" no "Tony please make him uncomfortable?"

"Seriously." She replied. "Tony, not all of us feel the need for revenge. I mean honestly, what does it say about me that I'm willing to mess with his life to get back at him. No, I need to be the adult in this situation."

"Son of a bitch." He breathes. "That bastard ruined you."

"Why because I'm trying to be a grown up?"

"No, because you take it so seriously." Tony stood from his seat. "He better hope I never get my hands on him. I'll make him regret ever sucking the fun out of you."

Darcy just rolled her eyes and got back to work as Tony stormed out.

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Darcy and Jane's usual spot was a small pub half way between Stark Tower and The NYU Campus where Jane was teaching for the semester. Flannigan's was a nice place with dark wood paneling and classic green glass light fixtures. In the afternoon it hosted the business crowd, but at night it was a cop bar filled with veterans and rookies alike.

Darcy entered the pub and found Jane at their usual booth near the back. They greeted each other like the old friends they were and ordered lunch from the waitress who took their order every time and probably knew it by heart at this point.

After telling Jane for the umpteenth time that she wasn't mad they ditched her last night, Jane asked her for all the details about what really happened.

"What do you mean, what really happened? I told you, I wandered around a bit."

"You also mentioned meeting some of the other fighters." Jane replied. "Anyone interesting."

Judging by the look on her face Jane was hoping for a different story than she was about to get.

"I guess. I mean I met Thor's opponent Steve. He was really nice. He pointed out the bouncer who would call me a cab."

"Anyone else?"

"There was a couple of guys I met in the back. Jack and Brock. Brock was kind of nice."

"What about Jack?"

Darcy shrugged. "He was okay. Kind of quiet but he seemed like a nice guy."

"Oooo, the strong silent type."

"I guess so."

Darcy's less than enthused response had Jane frowning.

"Okay listen. I know that Darrell completely destroyed any hint of romance that may have once lived inside you, but you can't let him control you anymore. He spent two years crushing your soul you can't let him win."

"He applied for a job at Stark Industries." She suddenly blurted out.

"You're kidding right?"

Darcy shook her head. "Tony stopped in to tell me this morning. Apparently he's required by the board to give him an interview so he wanted to warn me that he'd be around."

"Well, at least Tony has your back."

Darcy hummed in reply. "So, how work?"

"Urgh, you know." Jane began and proceeded to spend a good portion of the time before their lunch came explaining the pitfalls of academia. The rest of lunch was spent volleying topics back and forth.

When lunch was over they said their goodbyes and headed their separate ways.

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The diner Brock and Jack eat at whenever possible was family owned and served a mean burger. It was right down the street from the local cop bar which is how they came to find the little slice of heaven.

"Is there anything else I can get you boys?" Beth questioned topping off their coffee. Beth was their regular waitress working the afternoon shift so she could take morning classes at NYU.

"The check if you don't mind Sweetheart." Brock replies with his most charming smile.

Jack snorted when she was gone. "Laying it on a little thick there aren't you?"

Brock smirks. "One could say the same about you and Darcy."

Jack choked on his coffee, coughing and sputtering to regain his breath.

"What the hell are you talking about?"

Brock outright laughed. "I think you know exactly what I'm talking about." His smirk widens. "You were staring at her last night. At the very least you were intrigued."

Jack rolled his eyes and went back to finishing his lunch.

"You should ask her out." Brock told him.

"The chance of ever seeing her again is slim to none." Jack replied disinterested. In truth he was very interested. he didn't know what it was about her, maybe it was her appearance, maybe it was the familiar look of loss in her eyes. Whatever it was, he felt drawn to her, the instant she looked up at him. of course, he being himself, he couldn't seem to get the words out of his mouth when she tried talking to her which in all honesty probably made her uncomfortable around him. luckily Brock had shown up and given him an excuse to pass it off as if he were being intense on purpose, when in reality he was terrible at socializing; finding the right words at any given moment that had nothing to do with his job.

"Well then, if you ever see her again you should definitely ask her out. Take it as a sign."

Jack finally looked up from his plate. "I'll tell you what, I'll ask Darcy out if I ever see her again, if you ask Beth out."

Brock had been dancing around asking the young woman out for months, flirting up a storm but never really making a move.

Brock held Jack's challenging gaze for a moment before; "Okay, fine."

Beth came back about that time and slid the check onto the table with a cheery smile. "There you are," she told them. "Have a good day guys and stay safe out there."

"Thanks Beth." Brock replies. "Actually there is one other thing." He stopped her retreat. She turned back and returned to the table. "Are you free this weekend? Maybe for some dinner?"

Beth blushed, her cheeks turning an adorable shade of red and she could barely get her response out as she stuttered out a yes. Brock smiled at her charmingly and she wrote her number on her notepad and tore it off for him.

When she was gone Brock looked back at Jack who was quite clearly

pouting. Jack tossed some money on the table for his half of the tab and tip and Brock did the same before following his oldest friend out the front door.

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Darcy was just approaching the corner down the street from the pub when she spotted Brock and Jack walking out of the diner she'd been meaning to try for ages. They were dressed in suits, not nearly as expensive as the ones Tony wore but their nice none the less and both men wear them well. It's the side arms and the badges that really draw her attention however.

Brock noticed her as he stopped beside a charger parked on the street. "Well would you look at that." Brock greets her, judging by the look on Jack's face that wasn't meant for her. "Darcy, what are the odds we'd run into you." Brock continued looking far too pleased to see her.

Darcy smiled politely. "It is a bit coincidental."

"It is isn't?" Brock smirked turning to Jack. "Don't you think Jack?"

Jack's reply was a glare at Brock.

"Of course it is." Brock turned a big grin on Darcy.

"How are you? What are you up to?"

"I'm fine thanks, I just left lunch with a friend down at Flannigan's"

"Flannigan's, gotta love that place." it was just a bit too chipper for Brock and Jack had to resist the urge not to gag.

Brock kept asking questions and making small talk and while he carried on Jack took the opportunity to get a good look at Darcy. Gone were the jeans and beat up converse and now that she was without the oversized sweater her gorgeous curves were more apparent in her bright red pencil skirt and matching low cut blouse.

Jack was pulled from his observations when the dispatcher called out over their radio instructing all units in the area to get their asses in gear.

Brock bid his farewell to Darcy as did Jack and Darcy replied in turn before walking off. Before Jack could get into the passenger seat Brock locked the door giving him an expectant look when Jack looked in at him. He rolled his eyes when all Jack did was stare back him. Brock nodded his head at Darcy's retreating back and with a sigh Jack knew what Brock was trying to do.

"Darcy!" Jack called out to her and she stopped and turned to face him as he straightened from looking down into the car and jogged toward her. "I uh, I was wondering if maybe you'd be interested in grabbing some dinner sometime?"

Darcy stood, mouth gaping. It was obvious she wasn't expecting this. "I... Um... Yes... Yes... I'd like that." She replied as if she

hadn't expected the answer she gave.

"Great," Jack fiddled around checking several of his pocket before finally finding what he was looking for in the inside jacket pocket. He pulled out a business card and handed it over. "My personal number is on the back." He explained.

"Right," she began pulling her purse off her shoulder and digging through it only to come up with a business card of her own. "Here you go." She passed it to him.

"Great," he repeated mentally cringing at the awkwardness of the moment. "I'll call you."

"Or text," Darcy continued. "Whichever."

Jack had to physically stop himself from saying great a third time as he nodded at her and headed back to the car. This time the doors were unlocked and climbed into the passenger's seat only to be met with a smirk from Brock.

"One word and I will shoot you." Jack told him as he stuck the card in his pocket.

"But then you'll miss your date."

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Darcy spent the rest of the day in a daze, flying through her work but not really registering anything. By the time she made it home the full weight of the afternoon had settled on her shoulders and for the life of her she couldn't really remember when exactly she had decided to start dating again. In fact, the longer she thought about it the more she realized that she hadn't actually decided to start dating again; more specifically she hadn't even considered it. After nearly two years in a relationship with a man she had come to recognize as her abuser she couldn't really picture herself in another relationship, despite what her friends had been pushing her towards.

Of course, Jack hadn't asked for a relationship, he'd asked her to dinner and really that didn't necessarily mean he wanted a relationship at all, for all she knew he was just interested in seeing where things could go. That wasn't so bad, was it?

No, it wasn't, because she was an adult and she was perfectly capable of going to dinner with a guy she'd just met. Then again, what if he didn't think she was good enough, what if he was wrong about her and he didn't like what she was beyond the surface. Maybe when he finally called, if he finally called she should just tell him she changed her mind and be done with it.

Darcy kicked off her shoes at the door and stooped to pick them up. She then carried them back into the bedroom and put them away in the closet. As she was straightening up her closet it occurred to her that after eight hours of work, she'd come home exhausted and ready to collapse on the couch and not move until the hunger was unignorable, and yet here she was, cleaning up her closet as if it were really that messy to begin with.

Tony was right, Darrell had ruined her. For years Darcy was the kind

of girl who came home from a long day, kicked off her shoes and relaxed, picking up whatever mess she'd left in her wake whenever she found the energy to do so, but shortly after she started dating Darrell it became increasingly apparent that he didn't really appreciate that particular detail about her, in fact, he didn't really appreciate a lot of different details about her. Like her various collections such as books and movies and pretty much anything vintage or eclectic.

It didn't take him long to express what he really thought of her interests and behaviors and while she held her own for a while against his attempts to strip her of those quirks, eventually he won and gone were the colorful quilts and ugly sweaters, gone were the books he didn't think were adult enough, gone were the movies that reflected her happy, loving personality.

She'd let him strip her of everything she loved and the worst part, when she was warned by the people who loved her, she didn't listen. She wanted to believe that he wanted what was best for her because he loved her. She wanted to believe that what they had was real and he was just looking out for her future.

And then the truth hit her like a bullet in the back. He didn't love her, not the way normal people love other normal people. He wanted someone under his thumb, he wanted a puppet, and that is exactly what he got. She had to hand it to him, he had been very clever. He knew that she was too smart for him, too strong willed, he knew that if he even considered raising a hand to her she would be gone in a heartbeat. So he used his words, because words were subtle and subtlety was something she never associated with abuse.

And now here he was, three months gone from her life- and wasn't that a huge weight off her shoulders- and she was still letting him control her, letting him dictate what she should and shouldn't do. Well screw him, when Jack finally called she was going on that date, she was going to dress to impress and whether or not it worked out at least she could say she tried.

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"Do you have the Osborne file?" Detective Clint Barton asked before taking a big sloppy bite of his take out, then setting the container back on the conference table. Jack set his own food down and passed said file across the table.

"Anymore eggrolls?" Jack questioned and Brock passed him that container. A few moments later Detective Steve Rogers entered the conference room setting a stack of case files on the table and taking a seat.

"I got nothing in the phone records." Steve told them reaching for a container of food himself. "What about his emails?" he continued before shoveling an obscene amount of noodles into his mouth.

"Still looking," Detective Sam Wilson replied never looking up from his laptop screen. "Nothing so far though."

"Damn," Clint cursed with a sigh. "This guy can't be that smart."

"He doesn't have to be smart for things to work in his favor." Steve replied.

"Speaking of things working in your favor," Brock began turning to his partner. "Did you call her yet?"

Jack sighed harshly.

"Who her?" Steve questioned.

"The brunette from the other night."

"The pretty one with the blue eyes."

Brock nodded. "That'd be the one."

"When did you get her number?"

"This afternoon." Brock replied for him. "We ran into her on the back from lunch."

"Talk about fate." Steve laughed.

"That's what I said."

"Oh for the love of god." Jack exclaimed, cutting off their conversation.

"So, did you call her yet?"

"No Brock, I did not call her yet. In case you haven't noticed we're a little busy right now."

"We're not that busy." Clint added earning himself a glare from across the table.

"Yeah Jack, why don't you call her right now." Sam suggested still not looking up from his screen.

"I'm not going to call her now, it's late."

"Sounds like an excuse to me." Steve replied. "And really it's only seven."

Jack sighed again shaking his head.

"Come on Jack," Brock clapped him on the shoulder. "Take the leap already."

"If I call her, can we get back to work?"

Brock nodded and the others silently agreed. He rolled his eyes and pushed himself to his feet, pulling his phone from his belt and walking out of the conference room.

"What, we don't get to hear?" he heard Clint ask as he left, making his way over to his desk in the bullpen. He pulled her card out of his jacket pocket on the back of his chair and slowly dialed the number, hesitating over the send button.

"Son of a bitch." He muttered before finally pressing the button and raising it to his ear.

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Darcy stepped out of the bath fully rested and relaxed. She dressed in her comfy fleece jammies and poured herself a glass of wine before taking up with a book in bed. She had just opened to her marked page when her phone began to buzz on the nightstand beside her. He picked up the phone and debated letting it ring when she didn't recognize the number, but in the end she answered it.

"Hello?"

"Darcy? It's Jack."

A little flutter lit in her chest at the sound of his voice and she tried not to think too hard on it.

"Oh, hi, how are you?" she asked unable to keep the smile from her voice.

"I'm alright, how are you?"

"Well, thank you."

"That's good." He replied opening the conversation to an awkward pause.

"Soâ€¦" she eventually broke the silence.

"So, I, uhâ€¦" Jack chuckled awkwardly. "Well I don't know if you've noticed but I'm kind of bad with words."

Darcy laughed softly. "You don't say. You did seem like the strong silent type the other night."

"Yeah, sorry about that."

"Don't worry about it." She smiled. "So, was there any particular reason you called?"

"Yes actually," He began. "I was wondering if you were free for dinner this weekend, say Friday night."

"Yes, that sounds great. Just let me know when and where."

"7:00, at the bistro on 42nd?"

"I love that place, I can't wait."

"Great, then I will see you at seven- on Friday."

"Count on it."

xXx

"Well?" Brock questioned.

"Well what?" Jack asked reclaiming his seat.

"How did it go?" Clint piped up. Jack shrugged.

"Not bad."

They were silent, Jack going back to work while his friends stared at him.

"And!" Brock finally exclaimed. Jack looked up and around the table.

"And what?" he asked. "The agreement was, I call her, we get back to work. I did not agree to talk about the call."

"Oh come on, you just gonna leave us hanging."

"Yeah, pretty much."

End
file.